لماذا اخترت الإسلام

WHY I CHOSE ISLAM

(Based on a True Story)



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Introduction

O seeker of truth, if you really seek the truth put aside all preconceived notions, and open your heart…do not let others judge or make a decision for you. This being said, I would like to share with you this beautiful account of a man's journey to the truth…I believe it be best if he narrates his account to us himself, so I will leave you with Mr. Thomas…

بسم ا الر ن الرحيم

I begin with the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Gracious

I was born to staunch Catholic Christian parents. Even from my youngest days, my father sometimes took me along with him when he went to preach, it was quite obvious that he wanted me to succeed him in his profession. By the time I reached grade twelve, I could preach the Gospels in my own way. In college, I often met my Protestant classmates and discussed the differences in our faiths and the performance of rituals.

By the time I completed the first year in college, I was sufficiently grounded in the knowledge of the Christian Faith as held by the Catholic Church. I was given a scholarship from the Church funds and in return for the help I received, I was required to receive special coaching in understanding parts of the Holy Book, under the Chief Priest of the Church who loved to teach me very much and was very intimately attached to me.

Having appeared in the first group for my intermediate course I used to sit working at his subjects till late at night. One night when all were asleep and I was absorbed in my studies an idea suddenly struck my mind to examine the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, the basic formula of the Christian Faith. The question how god ex-

ists in three persons, and yet has a single divine nature, a single will and be of one substance arose in my mind.

My failure to reconcile my belief in the Trinity with the reasoning of the science of logic, created a mental restlessness in me. Days passed on and many a time, I thought of asking my father to help me in solving the problem which puzzled my mind but I knew that my father would never appreciate the least doubt in the dogmatic belief of the Catholic School. However, one day when I found my father in a happy mood and asked him to explain the Holy Trinity…he finally said:

"In matters of faith one has to stop reasoning…this doctrine is beyond the grasp of human reason. One should believe in the doctrine only by one's heart and mind!"

This reply from my father upset me to a great extent…all my thinking got centered in the question which had become a definite problem to puzzle my mind further and I wondered saying: ***"Is this the foundation upon which the huge edifice of the Christian faith is built? Is the basis of my faith only a matter of blind following of some dictated belief which can never stand reasoning or the independent scrutiny by the dispassionate and impartial arguments from the clean conscience?"***

I became extremely worried and made up my mind to blindly believe in the Trinity.

One day one of our senior lecturers was sitting alone in his room and I entered with his permission and asked him if he could help me to solve something which to me was a perplexing problem. He very kindly asked me what it was. I asked him to explain to me how God, a single being, can exist simultaneously as three distinct persons: the Father, the Son (Jesus), and the Holy Spirit?!

The senior lecturer smiled and said: "Is it that you do not like my stay in this college?" I asked him: "Why sir?" He said: "What do you think the college authorities who are staunch Catholics will do with me, if someone informs them that I discuss in my private room things opposed to the Christian faith in general? Will they keep me on the staff of the College any longer? If you want to discuss anything here, you must confine your discussion to the subject of your studies in the College!"

Thereafter, I made an appointment with him to see him in his house.

On Sunday when I met the senior lecturer he first asked me as to what made me inquire into the Doctrine of Trinity. I said that I wanted to know how far the doctrine stood to reasoning.

He smiled and said, "Why don't you ask any one of our priests?"

I said: "I have asked them but they say it is a matter of belief or faith and it should not be subjected to any logic

or philosophy. This has upset me. This has raised the question in me, if what I believe in is unreasonable and illogical, why should I subject myself to any blind following? Is God so unjust to expect man to believe in a doctrine about Himself which no human brain can ever reasonably conceive? I request you, Sir, to somehow give me some method of arguing out the possibility of such existence as the doctrine of Trinity wants us to believe in!”

The senior lecturer smiled and said: ‘Dear Thomas, suppose you want me to prove by some mathematical formula how water can remain water and the same time be fire, or how a stone can be a stone and at the same time be water too, how can I do it? I do not think any sensible man on earth can ever conceive such a possibility…how the Ever living God who being the Ever living, can also at the same time be a mortal! (i.e. be a man to suffer death at the hands of the other mortals?) And how the same mortal being at the same time be the Absolute Immortal God? It is a problem which our priests want us to believe and we have to merely believe in it and none has any choice of even questioning the practicability of this inconceivable dogma.’

He went on saying: “The fact is when God, Whom we believe as One, is absolutely One, it means that God is singularly One in natural essence of His existence, free from any different or variant factors having anything to do with His pure or Absolute Unity to justify His being

the Absolute One, owing an indivisible existence, by Himself. Division suggests that the One is not an Absolute One but a compound of some variants and that which is a composed being can never really be One in the true meaning of Oneness. And certainly the one dependent in its existence upon its different components can never be independent in its action, whereas God is the Absolute One, independently Omnipotent in His Will and His action.

Besides how can any three which are three separate beings, with three variations justify being three separate entities, remain three separately individual native properties differentiating them from each other, and become conceivably the absolute indivisible one, without the least variation in the essential oneness?

An absolute one must be totally independent in its existence, Mr. Thomas…it is impossible to reason out the doctrine of the Holy Trinity for it is an inconceivable human riddle!"

He continued: 'The only thing is that we Christians are shut out of the vast sources of knowledge about the truth and of the higher factor in matters of religion which are available outside our own fold, by damning every non-Christian as the Devil's work. We Christians, Mr. Thomas, in our madness to swell up our ranks have played such a disgraceful role that a scholar like Sir Dennison

Ross had to helplessly disclose truth about this in his foreword to the translation of the Quran by George Sale."

I was amazed to hear the arguments of the senior lecturer who was himself known as a Catholic, and at the same time I was very much encouraged to know that my doubt about the unreasonableness of the doctrine of Trinity was something which had made a highly educated and enlightened mind like the senior lecturer of Mathematics to enquire into it. I was much benefited by the discussion with the senior lecturer for I came to know arguments justifying the doubt created in my mind.

My study of the matter in the 'Islamic Literature' and the translation of the Quran opened my eyes to many great and very important factors that effect human life on earth. Once I visited the senior lecturer in his house and to my amazement I found him possessing a great amount of literature on Islam!

I further asked him: "May I know sir, if you have embraced the faith of the Muslims?"

He replied: "Do not worry yourself about my personal choice!"

I took the copy of the translation of the Quran by George Sale and read the introduction by Sir E. Dennison Ross. The introduction needs to be read with special attention. Sir Ross said:

"For many centuries the acquaintance which the majority of Europeans possessed of Mohammedanism was based almost entirely on the distorted reports of fanatical Christians which led to the discrimination of a multitude of gross calumnies. What was good in Mohammedanism was entirely ignored and what was not good in the eyes of Europe was exaggerated or misinterpreted. The unity of God and the simplicity of his creed was probably a more potent factor in the spread of Islam than the sword of the ghaziz." (G. Sale's translation of the Koran – Introduction)

This statement of the great Christian scholar of international repute, created in me the thirst to know the original teachings of Islam especially about the Islamic concept of God.

About four years passed away and by this time I knew the contents of the Quran. Many things had aroused my attention. I had discussed many doubtful points with the senior lecturer whom I found to have read the Quran several times with a better and more critical view. I was now longing to meet some Muslim scholar to cross examine him about certain doubts about the Islamic Faith.

Once I thought of Hinduism but what I saw daily with my own eyes, curses of untouchability and the reservations of the caste system prevalent before us and besides everything else, the idol worship and the observance of innumerable rituals did not prompt me to take up any

enquiry into its tenets. I could never understand the superiority exclusively and arbitrarily claimed for the members of certain castes, simply because they had accidentally been born in those folds. I had seen with my own eyes how the people belonging to certain castes are imagined as lower in the society and are treated as the untouchables, not allowed even to enter into the Hindu Temples. I had seen these poor souls being prohibited even to take drinking water from the wells reserved for the superior classes.

The havoc in the social life played by Hinduism dividing humanity into castes and sub-castes and the unreasonable superiority of one caste over the other is itself so repulsive that no one would like to take any trouble of executing any studies about the doctrines of that faith.

While resenting the caste system and the sectarian segregation in the Hindu folds, I was automatically reminded of the similar restrictions amongst Christians. I asked myself:

"Why criticize other people and their beliefs when the religion which I myself belong to, has in it the sectarian segregation as well? Are not Churches in Christendom owned exclusively for the members of the particular sects? Are there not churches belonging to a particular sect which cannot be used by the people of the other sect? Has not Christianity failed to unite mankind into one human society? Did Jesus preach all these differences and

dissensions which we the Christians have innovated? Is it not then that we are far away from the original objects of the Mission of Jesus Christ?"

Against the irreconcilable differences and the innumerable dissensions of the social order in the very folds of Hinduism and Christianity, I was very much impressed by the genuine and real brotherhood practiced day and night among the Muslims. I found that a Muslim Mosque is a Mosque belonging to everyone who calls himself a Muslim and that there is no reservation of seats in the Mosque. I saw with my own eyes, Muslims of all ranks, all social and economical status of different complexions of various nationalities all standing in one row, turning towards one direction, praying to one God in one language, and after the prayer shaking hands with one another. Brotherhood or social equality claimed more in theory by other schools of thought in the world; I found it to be an ever experienced and a living reality in the daily life of the Islamic folds.

One day I was informed by the senior lecturer who by this time had become a close friend of mine that a Muslim scholar was going to deliver some talks in English on the life of the Prophet of Islam in a hall near the big Mosque of my town. My senior lecturer and I both attended the talks and met the lecturer who was an old friend of my senior lecturer. We talked with the lecturer about several important topics.

During my meeting with the Muslim lecturer I asked him if he would kindly answer some questions for my own information. He said: "I will most willingly answer your questions."

I put forward the following questions which he very cheerfully answered: "What proof have you besides the Quran to establish that Muhammad was truly a Prophet of God?"

He answered: "Have you your Bible with you?" I said: "Yes."

He took the following verses and read them to me one after the other:

The Acts 3, Verses 22: ***"For Moses truly said unto the fathers, a prophet shall the Lord your god raise unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you." 23: "And it shall come to pass that every soul which will not hear the Prophet shall be destroyed from among the people." 24: "Yea! And all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days."***

The Acts 7: Verses 37: ***"This is that Moses, who said unto the children of Israel, a Prophet shall the Lord raise up unto you your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear."***

John 14: ***"Jesus says: 16: 'I will pray the Father, and he shall give another comforter – that he may abide with you forever.'"***

26: "Nevertheless I tell you the truth: it is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away, the comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart I will send him unto you."

16: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye can not bear them now."

16: "Howbeit, when he the Spirit of Truth, is come, he will guide you unto all truth for he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; he will show you things to come."

I read the passages which I had already gone through several times before, but this time the perfect confidence with which the lecturer asked me to read the verse from my own sacred scriptures in support of his claim, threw a new light upon them for me to understand the matter dispassionately. Yet I replied: "But the prophecy is about the advent of Jesus!" He smiled and said: "Read the verse again! Does not the verse say that God will raise a Prophet like unto Moses i.e. he will be a man born of a father and a mother as was born Moses; whereas Jesus was born only of a mother. Besides the Prophet promised by God must be a man like Moses but you yourself call Jesus as the son of God! Moses was a lawgiving Prophet and the one like him must be a law-giver, whereas Jesus

was only a law-abider, following the law of the Ten Commandments already introduced through Moses. Besides one must betray his common sense as well as his learning to say that I and He the two different persons, i.e. the First and the Third person mean the same, or the one who departs prophesying about the advent of some one else, to be one and the same."

The argument was quite reasonable. Then I asked the lecturer: "Do you not believe in Jesus as the son of God? Cannot Jesus be God himself in the form of a man?" The lecturer smiled and very cheerfully replied: "Can there be a son to anyone without a wife, my friend? Can anyone who believes in the sonship of Jesus, at the same time sensibly imagine Virgin Mary to have been used by God as a wife? Let us seek protection of God against any such devilish straying of our minds. Sonship if used in the Bible can be only to mean a creature or the one who has received life from God. Otherwise, what do you say about Jesus addressing himself as a son of man… ***"The son of man is come eating and drinking and ye say, behold a gluttonous man, and a wine bibber a friend of publicans and sinners."*** (St. Luke 7:34)

"The son of man be ashamed." (Luke 9:26)

"Saying the son of the man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men." (Luke 24)

"The son of man shall give unto you." (John 6:27)

Jesus addressed God as his father and also as our father which means that God is taken as the father of Jesus as much as He is the father (or the creator) of any of us, and hence Jesus' sonship can mean in the sense of creature of god, the term 'son of god' used by Jesus can be only in sense of 'servant of god' – as Jesus refers to himself as god's servant. This fact is testified by the verses by which every prophet of God from Adam has been termed as the son of God in Luke 3rd chapter in verses from 23 to 30. Jesus is called as the son of Joseph and the genealogy of Jospeh is traced to Adam and Adam is called the son of God. Read the 30th verse of the same chapter: ***"Which was the son of Enos, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God."*** (Luke 3:30)

These ready answers from the Bible created a very deep impression upon my mind about the amount of comparative study the Muslims do and how strong and reasonable they are in their faith about the Oneness of God.

I asked the lecturer: "Do you believe in the Holy Bible as a Heavenly Book or not?" In reply to my question the lecturer requested me to answer the following questions:

His Questions:	My Answers:
Is the Bible which is in your hands, the book which Jesus wrote as a scripture revealed by God?	"No."
Did Jesus order or desire at any time in his life to write anything on his behalf?	"No"
Was the Bible which is in your hands, written during the life time of Jesus?	"No"
Was the Bible which is in your hands today written immediately after the departure of Jesus?	"No"

Then he said: "Please read p. 17 in the **"Founder of Christianity and his Religion"** published by the Christian Literature Society, Madras. It is said in the book: *"The whole Bible contains sixty six books written by forty different authors over a space of about fifteen centuries." It is clearly said in the book that: JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF WROTE NOTHING. Oral teaching*

was for several years, the only means employed in the spread of Christianity. It was for the guidance of those young converts that the earliest writings of the new Testament were composed."

The same book further discloses that: *"They were probably written about Twenty years after the death of Christ."*

On pg. 18 it is stated: *"The Gospels do not give a complete history of the life of Christ. They are rather memoirs."*

I said: "But the Bible is the word of god inspired and written by the disciples of Jesus!" He again smiled and said: "Mr. Thomas, if the Bible is the Book of the Disciples and of Jesus, how would you account for the differences in the Book, if it is an inspired word of God…does not the Catholic Bible contain some books which the Protestant version does not?"

Have you read what Mr. Wilson says about the Bible, in the introduction to the 'Diaglot' – published by the Watch Tower Society? *"If it has not been published by kingly authority it would not now be venerated by English and American Protestants, although it had come direct from God. It has been convicted of containing over 20,000 errors! Nearly 700 Greek Mss are not known and some of them are very ancient whereas the translator of the common version had only the advantage of some 8 Mss none of which was earlier than the tenth century."*

Is not the Bible based upon 8 manuscripts…whereas there are 700 manuscripts now available? If what is contained in all such manuscripts is also the inspired word of god, why were these manuscripts left away? In view of all these facts brought to your light, if you still believe in the Bible as the inspired word of God, you may do so but you can't expect the whole world to do it. If you make a serious and an impartial study of the Old and the New Testaments you will find in them the amount of blasphemies which the Jewish mind has fabricated against Lot, David, Noah, and Abraham who were the Holy Apostles of God, viz:

"And Noah began to be a husbandman and he planted a vineyard."

"And he drank of the vine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within this tent."

"And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father and told his two brethren about it."

"And Shem and Japheth took a garment and laid it upon their father, and their faces were backward, and they saw not their father's nakedness." (Gen: 10:123)

Lot committing adultery with his own two daughters (Gen: 19:30-38)

David taking possession of his neighbor's wife (II Sam 11:4)

I asked, "What? Do you Muslims believe in the prophet's of god other than Muhammad to be totally sinless and holy?"

He answered me by reciting to me the following verses from the Quran:

﴾Say (O Muslims), We believe in Allah, and that which has been revealed to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the Tribes and that which has been given to Moses and Jesus, and that which has been given to the Prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them. And we submit to Allah.﴿ (2:136)

﴾The Messenger of God believed in what had been revealed to him from his Lord, and so do the believers (i.e. Muslims) they all believe in Allah and His Angels, His Books (the different holy scriptures) and His Messengers; we make no difference between any of His Messengers.﴿ (2:285)

The above verses of the Holy Quran bear clear testimony to the fact that, as one of the fundamentals of his faith, every Muslim has to believe not only in the Holy Prophet Muhammad, but in all the other Prophets and Messengers as truthful and holy and should not make any distinction between them. The following verse of the Holy Quran informs us of the fact that Prophets were raised by God, among all nations in all parts of the earth.

﴾There is not a nation but a warner has gone among them.﴿ (35:24)

It convinced me that Islam, alone, is an all comprehensive faith which recognizes all other religions and which contains in it a perfectly harmonious integration of all the good, found partly in the other religious orders of the world. The sacred book of Islam i.e. the Holy Quran is the final exposition of the Divine Truth. The limitation of the human mind of the different ages, did not allow even Prophet like Jesus to speak out the whole truth. Jesus had to depart with many things yet to be told to his people. *(John 16:14)*. Jesus had to tell his people to wait until the advent of the spirit of truth to disclose the whole of the truth. *(John 16:13)*

I was further impressed by the universal aspect of the religion of Islam. Every answer from the lecturer was with an unchallengeable authority and with an unbreakable argument. I was awakened to differentiate between genuine truth and the fabrications of falsehood and to know many new factors to which I was blind all those years. But I did not know how to reconcile the dawn of true knowledge of truth with my original blind dogmatic belief and my belonging to the Christian faith any longer. I wanted to find out some failure on the part of the lecturer to answer satisfactorily some question or the other, so that I may have some excuse, be that even a false one, to maintain my position in the Christian faith.

The lecturer continued after some time with the question: "Shall I ask you something if you do not mind answering it for my information?" I said: "Yes." He asked: "Do you think Jesus to be a son of God or God himself?" I said: "Jesus is God himself in the form of His son."

He said: "Can you ever conceive anyone to be the immortal god and at the same time be a mortal (man) to be caught in the hands of other mortals to suffer death? Can anything be high and at the same time low, black, and at the same time white? Can there be darkness and the same time light? What philosophy is this?"

The lecturer continued saying: "Do you ever consider that there is one other question confronting the doctrine of the Trinity which needs to be answered by every Trinitarian that if any three different beings which are three different entities, are also at the same time One, with absolute unity in all the perfect sense or meaning of Oneness, what is the common control which makes them remain three and also be one at one and the same time? If there be any factor of such a wonderful and inconceivable phenomena causing this amazing effect, then that supreme causative power, which controls the number and the unity, will alone be the Omnipotent God and not any one of the three which are only the controlled components. Besides there arises another problematic question which a believer in the Trinity will have to answer i.e. as to who is it that controls or determines the splitting

of one into three different others, to be neither more nor less in number? There must be some cause for this controlled effect and that the causative factor acting supreme over three will be the Omnipotent God and not any of the three which will only be the effect of the Supreme controlling cause.

Similarly, it will raise the question, what is the causative power which effects the three to be only one when joining together rather than divided into many groups of beings and, if there be any such cause, that supreme controlling cause will be the omnipotent god, not any of the three who will only be the subservient ones. Under any circumstances no sensible man can ever reasonably believe in any effect whatsoever without some causative factor effecting it.

However, the Holy Trinity is only a problematic doctrine created by the Christian Church which no logical reasoning can ever prove true.

I had to helplessly agree to the views of the lecturer for I could not now reasonably believe in the existence of anything being itself and at the same time being its own opposite.

"I would like you Mr. Thomas," said the lecturer "to ponder a little over How the belief of Jesus being God Himself or the son of God, coincides with the fact that he was so terrified at the impending crucifixion that he

shouted: ***"Eli, Eli, Lama Sabachtani?"*** (Meaning: My God, My God, has thou forsaken me?) (Matthew 27:46)

"What philosophy is that? If Jesus was God Himself, does it mean that God was forsaken by God Himself and can that be God who felt hopeless and shouted to be rescued?"

"Your Bible itself Mr. Thomas, reported that the son of God was forsaken by his father (god) in which case the forsaken son automatically and quite naturally forfeits his personal merits as a son and his relationship of being a son to his father. What do you say? Of what profitable use can the attachment to a forsaken son be? Mr. Thomas, please tell me!"

I was dumbstruck – and I did not know what to say and what to do with the faith I already possessed as a staunch Christian.

"Besides," the lecturer continued: "Do you think Jesus to be God himself when he falls down crying, praying to someone else to remove the cup of death by crucifixion?"

I asked: "Alright, sir, how do you reconcile the violence used by the Prophet of Islam to his being an Apostle of God?!"

Immediately came the reply from the lecturer: "Please, Mr. Thomas, quote a single instance from the whole life story of the Holy Prophet Muhammad to show that he has ever committed any unprovoked aggression or any

single instance of his taking the least initiative in attacking any single soul. Each expedition of a battle he led or he allowed was only in self-defense! The Bible does not preach self-defense. The Bible preaches self-surrender to the extent of handing over everything in one's possession when anything which was in one's hand had been taken away by any aggressor. Does any Christian follow this?"

"Apart from the political history of the Christian nations of Europe, do you not remember the inhuman methods employed by Christendom to spread its faith?"

I was ashamed to hear what has been reported and I have to listen quietly to the records of the disgraceful conduct of the Christians. I at last ventured to ask one more question. "There is the doctrine of atonement of expiation of sins of men through the blood of Jesus. Jesus having paid the price of the sins of man, i.e. he who believes in Jesus is cleansed and saved… have you any such accommodation in Islam?

The lecturer smiled and replied: "My friend, the greatest of God's gifts to man is common sense. If man forfeits it of his own accord, then no one can help him. First let me know if the doctrine appeals to reason and common sense. A, for example, a Christian by faith, i.e. a believer in Jesus Christ as his savior, plunders the house of B and the members of B's family. Does sense and logic agree to 'A' being let off unpunished by the law, particularly to

the Law of the All-Just Lord of the Universe, simply because 'A' accepts Jesus as his savior?"

I had to say "No" because, to say otherwise would mean I forfeit my common sense and go against reasoning!

He continued: "There is one very grave aspect of the doctrine of atonement through the blood of Jesus, i.e. when we pay for a thing, the thing becomes our own and the previous owner of that thing forfeits his entire claim over it for the price he has already received, is it not?"

I said: "Yes."

Then he said: "If the sins of man have been paid for, god has no right to punish any sinner! Every sinner who merely believes in Jesus would be free do anything in the world which his brutal passion dictates him to do, for God his Lord has no right whatsoever even to question any sinner, for Jesus has met the cost of all his sins. Can this ever be sensible logic or common sense? Can this doctrine help life on earth to continue for one moment in peace and security?"

He continued: "Please remember, Islam wants every individual to be kept bound by his being answerable with his own individual life as well as the interest of the collective life in this world, himself as a member of not only the human race but also of the creation of the Lord as a whole. Islam continuously invites and encourages

man towards righteousness with the promise of the blissful life in the Hereafter and repeatedly warns him against vice and the consequent chastisement from the All Just Lord. The Holy Quran repeatedly warns saying:

> **﴾And be on your guard against a Day when one soul shall not avail another in the least, neither shall intercession on its behalf be accepted nor shall they be helped.﴿** (2:123)

> **﴾Whoever goes aright, for his soul does he go aright and whoever goes astray to its detriment only does he go astray, nor can the bearer of a burden bear the burden of another nor do we punish until We have sent a Messenger (to give warning).﴿** (17:15)

> **﴾O humankind! Surely, we have created you of a male and female and made you into nations and tribes that you may know each other; surely the most honorable of you with Allah is the one among you most careful of his duty. Surely Allah is All-knowing, All-aware.﴿** (49:13)

While threatening man with grievous punishment in recompense for his evil, the Holy Quran discloses also the infinite mercy of the All-Merciful Lord who does not want man, however much a sinner the individual be to be totally defect or hopeless of the merciful pardon from Him. The only condition for the pardon he needs being the sinner's repentance against his vices, with his inten-

tion of amending his conduct in the future, and the turning whole-heartedly to obedience and gratitude to the All-Merciful Lord for His infinite grace."

"For goodness sake, tell me Mr. Thomas, which do you think is reasonable and sensible, either making man intoxicated and careless against sinning (i.e. making him unreasonably confident of the price of his sins as having already been paid by someone) or alerting man with his commitment to virtue against vice, (i.e. keeping him warned of the natural consequences of getting punishment by the All-Just Lord, against any misconduct or disobedience)?''

I felt that I had the day understood the hollowness of the doctrine of atonement upon which is built the whole edifice of the Christian faith. The divine mercy of the Lord dawned upon my heart, a new light of Divine guidance. I thanked god for liberating me from the clutches of the grossly misleading dogmatic doctrine and leading me to Islam which I have myself found through an impartial enquiry that it is the right and the Straight Road to salvation which the All-Merciful Lord Himself has shown man through this Last Apostle Muhammad, may peace be upon him and his divinely chosen descendants.

When I disclosed my acceptance of the true argument advanced by the lecturer and thanked him, he told me:

"Thomas! You must thank God for blessing you with the fulfillment of his merciful promise to every sincere seeker of Truth!"

The All-Merciful Lord by His infinite mercy has fulfilled His merciful promise to give mankind the everlasting guidance through the Holy Prophet Muhammad who would abide in his guidance for all times.

After coming across so many strong and unbreakable arguments against the doctrine of the Holy Trinity and also about many other fundamentals of Christian belief, I only wondered how such an unreasonable faith could attract such a huge number of people in the world.

Once I found my father returning home very happy and immediately as he arrived he called me and said: "You will be glad to know my dear son that today I got 109 souls into our fold! At baptism of such a big number, the rev father, the chief of our mission praised my services very much and has increased my salary as well as my traveling allowance and has awarded me with a token reward corresponding to the number baptized through my efforts!"

I asked: "Who are they, father, who were baptized?"

He said: "They are from five surrounding villages. There are men, women, and children."

I asked: "Are they all educated?"

He said: “No, they are poor people of the slums; they are only laborers in the paddy fields of their villages.”

I asked if they had understood fully their undertaking as converts to the Christian faith. Would every one of them stand any cross examination against their decision to leave the folds they were in and their joining the Christian Belief?

He replied: “What do you mean? I told you they are all uneducated, poor illiterates; laborers, from the slums! The group consists of men, women, and children. Now I will have to go there every day and coach them up in the doctrine of our faith.”

On hearing this I smiled, and seeing me smiling my father asked: “Why do you smile, Thomas? What is the matter?” I said: “Nothing father, I do not see in this mass conversion any matter of pride or pleasure which any true religion or any genuine or reasonable faith can claim for itself, for it is nothing but exploiting the illiteracy and ignorance of the poor laborers. It is leading the mentally blind ones into something which they neither know nor recognize!

Do you think father, that any sensible man can reasonably be proud over his getting some illiterate men, women, and children to accept his own ideals and justifiably claim the least merit or value to his thought?”

"While the entry into a faith like Islam is effected only after a detailed study and enquiry by the learned ones with perfect conviction, we Christians pride over our success in swelling up our ranks by mass conversions of illiterate laborers, who by circumstances are forced to accept the Christian doctrine without knowing what they are doing is right or wrong? An ignorant mind is like a blank sheet, one can draw upon it whatever one's fancy chooses and once the inscription is made to be settled upon such raw material, any artist can pride over the palette having any particular design of his own. If today to win the sympathy of the ignorant masses we boast before our illiterate converts of our humanity and self sacrifices in the cause of the spread of our faith will the outer world also forget the Edict of Milan, father, and will all the records of history of the brutal outrages that Christendom committed against the poor helpless Jews, in its own passionate eagerness and anxiety to swell its ranks totally vanish?"

I continued: "If you kindly permit me father, I would like to know from you if the Bible in your hands is to be merely read, memorized and preached to the others… or is it to be acted upon in our daily life? If it is to be acted upon will you kindly show me, father, if the Christian world could ever practice the principle of turning the other cheek also if one is already smitten? Could any sincere Christian till now, give away his shirt when his coat was taken away? Will you, father, surrender our whole

house if anybody invades our residence and takes possession of any of the rooms in these premises? If the Christian powers of the world really believe in this doctrine of self surrender, why do they maintain their military and police forces?"

"Kindly tell me, father if there is any earthly use of merely believing in any golden ideals which can only adorn the pages of some book and which can only be preached but never practiced. Why should we not reasonably accept the doctrine of self-defense taught by Islam, and the principle of pardoning our offenders if they are repentant, and amending their conduct?"

"For goodness sake let me know father, how can three different ones at the same time be an absolute one, both numerically and also in the essential nature of perfect unity?"

"On what reasonable grounds can the one who is forsaken by God, be god himself and if Jesus is to be believed as the son of god, what claim to the relationship with his father can a forsaken son have?"

"What right had Christendom to claim any truth in it when its spread was caused by inhuman atrocities committed by the Christian forces against the poor helpless Jews. The conduct of the brutal outrages committed in the holy name of the Christ, has been fully reported even by the Christian authorities on the Edict of Milan and by the world renowned Christian scholar Gibbon in his fa-

mous work: **'The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.'**'

"The Doctrine of atonement through the blood of Christ, will naturally attract those sinners who have sinned and who do not want to give up sinning under the protection of the doctrine that the price of their sins has already been paid away and, however much worse sinners they themselves choose to be, they will not in the least be chastised for their heinous crimes, for, Jesus having paid away for the sins of man, God has forfeited His claim to punish the sinners thereafter."

"There are many such things, father which need a dispassionate study and an impartial judgment."

"I tell you father, that whatever be the consequences and whatever misfortune may afflict me, I, for one, have decided not to sell away or forfeit my conscience and common sense to believe in such unreasonable dogmatic doctrines. I have embraced Islam, and if you do not get angry with me, kindly allow me to explain to you the details of my enquiries; I will do it whenever I am requested to do so. I do not like any thought or belief of mine to be swallowed by any one by force, for the religion of Islam, which I now openly declare to have embraced, enjoins that there shall not be any compulsion in the matter of faith, as the truth has been revealed against falsehood."

To my utter surprise, I found my father fully attentive to my exposing my personal views and convictions and at the end, he said:

"Son, do not think that your father is a fool. I have been occasionally confronted with such ideas during my life whenever I had the occasion of discussing religion with my Muslim friends. For God's sake keep this matter strictly confined to you. Otherwise be sure we will be thrown out into the street as destitute."

A few days later, my father decided to declare himself a Muslim, too.

I now, for the information and guidance of every seeker of the truth, openly declare the actual findings of my sincere enquiry that Islam is not only the last Mighty Religion, but it is also the perfect faith which contains all the good. One of the most distinguishing and striking characteristics of Islam is that it requires of its followers to believe that all the religions of the world that preceded it were revealed by God for the respective people of those ages. It is one of the fundamentals of this faith that its followers must believe in all the prophets who were sent into the world before the Prophet Muhammad as truthful and sinless.

Muhammad is the name of the Prophet through whom this all comprehensive faith was revealed in its complete and perfect form for humanity at large for all times. It is the West that named his faith 'Mohammedanism' to co-

incide with the fashion of Christianity, Buddhism, Confucianism, Zoroastrianism, and Hinduism. On the other hand, the name of this religion is already given in its Book, the Holy Quran, as 'Islam', and the Prophet of Islam is called a Muslim as any other believer. As the various prophets preached this same Truth among different nations at different times in different languages, every Prophet of God is spoken of in the Holy Quran as a Muslim. Thus I have found, beyond all doubts that Islam is the religion which humanity needs for its progress in all spheres of its material as well as spiritual life to earn salvation in the end.

A Brief introduction of Islam for New Muslims

Islam is to submit completely to Allah by believing in His Oneness; by worshipping Him, and forsaking all types of *Shirk* (polytheism).

Islam is the only *Deen* accepted by Allah. It is the Final *Deen*, which has abrogated all previous religions. Allah does not accept from His slaves other than it. Allah says: *'Indeed the only accepted Deen is Islam.'*

He also says, *'and whoever seeks other than Islam, it would not be accepted from him, and he would be amongst the losers in the Hereafter.'*

How to enter the folds of Islam: ***The Two Testimonies of Faith***

(La ilahah Illa Allah wa anna Muhammad Rasool Allah)

To enter Islam, you must know the meaning of these two testimonies; pronounce them out of pure conviction, without the slightest doubt.

Translation of the *Shahadah* :

Ash'hadu: I certainly know and believe without the slightest doubt…

An la ilahah: that there is no god worthy of being worshipped in the universe...

Ilal'laah: This is an affirming sentence; i.e. that all acts of worship belong to Allah alone...

An'na Muhammadan: Muhammad, son of Abdullah, son of Abdul-Muttalib certainly...

Rasool Allah: was sent by Allah to mankind at large; to both men and jinn.

Its General Meaning: (***La ilahah Illa Allah Muhammad Rasool Allah***) There is no god worthy of being worshipped except Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah (*We obey his commands; refrain from whatever he has forbidden. We believe all that he has informed us with, and that Allah is not to be worshipped except in the manner which he has taught us*.)

The Divine Scripture of Islam: It is the Quran, which is the words of Allah; it was revealed to Muhammad, may Allah exalt his mention, through Angel Jibreel, may Allah exalt his mention.

It is incumbent upon the Muslim to memorize from it a portion enough for him to complete his prayers.

Indeed, all previous scriptures were distorted by their people; but the Quran remains in its pure form as it was

revealed to Muhammad, may Allah exalt his mention. Allah has promised to preserve it till the Day of Resurrection. Allah says: *'Indeed We have revealed the Dhikr, and We will preserve it.'* For this reason, no one can distort it.

After knowing the meaning of the Two Testimonies of Faith, pronouncing them and accepting them wholeheartedly (without being pressurized into accepting it or promised worldly things upon pronouncing it) he would become a Muslim, upon whom certain obligations would become due, and others would be waived. If he dies after pronouncing it, he would enter Jannah, even if he did not do a good deed.

The Five Pillars of Islam: (These pillars are to be physically executed, whether the action is attestation in the heart, profession by the tongue or a physical action)

The First Pillar: The Two Testimonies of Faith.

There is no god worthy of being worshipped except Allah, and Muhammad, son of Abdullah, was a Prophet and Messenger, who was sent by Allah to both men and jinn, to guide them to worship Allah alone, without associating any partners to Him.

The Second Pillar: The *Salah* (Prayer).

They are five prayers in total during the day and night. The reward the Muslim would attain from performing them would be equal to the reward of fifty prayers…if performed with its necessary conditions, pillars and compulsory acts. Some of its conditions are that the person who wants to pray be a sane Muslim, who has reached the age of distinction, having made *Taharah* (ablution) and intention (to pray a certain prayer), and to face the *Qiblah* while praying.

The Third Pillar: *Zakat* (Poor-Due).

It is due on every Muslim whose wealth has reached the *Nisaab* (amount of wealth which renders it incumbent upon its owner to pay *Zakat*) and has been held in possession for 12 lunar months, to give 2.5% from it to the poor and needy from among his relatives whom he legally does not have to support, and to other poor and needy Muslims, as well.

The Fourth Pillar: Fasting.

The person should intend to fast from the night. He should abstain from food and drink and sexual intercourse from *Fajr* till the sunset. The Month of Fasting is called Ramadhan. It is compulsory on every sane, adult Muslim.

The Fifth Pillar: Hajj (Pilgrimage)

It is the visitation to Makkah and other sacred sites with the intention to perform Umrah and Hajj. It is a duty on every adult, sane Muslim who can afford performing it, once in a lifetime. Women who have no *Mahram* (guardian) do not have to perform Hajj.

Whoever rejects one of these pillars out of disbelief or due to laziness would become a Kaafir (disbeliever) and would exit the folds of Islam.

The Six Pillars of Faith:

1. Belief in Allah: That is to believe that He is the Creator, the Provider, the One Who causes death and life, and the One in Whose Hands are all affairs. He is the First before Whom there is none, and He is the Last after Whom there is none, He is the Supreme above Whom there is none, and He is the Most-Knowledgeable from Whom nothing is hidden. We believe in all His beautiful names and attributes without distorting or suspending them, striking parallels between them or comparing them. Allah says, *'There is nothing that resembles Him, and He is the All-Seeing All-Hearing'*

2. Belief in the Angels: They are honorable slaves, who obey Allah. Among them are *Jibreel, Mee'ka'il, Israfeel, Ridhwaan, Maalik*, and the angels who record the good and bad deeds of men.

3. Belief in the Divine Scriptures which Allah revealed to his Prophets and Messengers. The Last Scripture is the Quran. It has abrogated all previous scriptures, thus it is not permissible to put into practice any scripture besides the Quran.

4. Belief in the Messengers: Allah sent them to mankind to guide them to worship Him alone, and not associate partners with Him. We believe that Allah sent them. Among them are the *'Ulul Azm'* (Prophets who exerted great efforts) who are, Nooh, Ibraheem, Musa, Eesa, and finally Muhammad, may Allah exalt his mention, and render him safe from every derogatory thing, who is the last and best of them.

5. Belief in the Last Day: It is the Day of Resurrection, the Day of Requital; the Day believers would enter Jannah and disbelievers sent to Hell-Fire; as for the sinners (who died without repenting), they would be subject to the will of Allah. He would either punish them or forgive them.

6. Belief in the *Qadr'* (Preordainment) both in its evil and good consequences. Know that whatever is ordained would come to pass; whatever you will be afflicted with will take place. Everything which takes place in this universe is already recorded in the Preserved Tablet (*al-Lauh al-Mahfoodth*).

Last Thought

I hope that you read this book with an open heart and mind…and I pray to God that you see the light of truth.